



The Blurb



Newsletter of The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club

61 Years of Public Service, 1949 to 2010

Volume 61 Number 1

www.phil-mont.org

January 2011



In the words of my favorite Vulcan,

“Live Long and Prosper!”

Hmm, 1/1/11 - I should play this one!

Auction Fest is January 12th at the general membership meeting so tidy up the shack, bring your goods to sell and cash to buy!

<i>The Blurb</i> is published monthly by and for the members of The PHIL-MONT MOBILE RADIO CLUB, Inc., whose purpose is to promote Amateur Radio in general, and Mobile Radio in particular. <i>Copying and quoting</i> is permitted with a credit line. We gladly exchange publications with other amateur radio clubs. Requests should be sent to the Editor. <i>Subscriptions</i> are available to non-members for \$12, addressed to the Treasurer. Editor: Rick DeVirgiliis ND3B nd3b@arrl.net 215-908-7225 Club Archivist: Gwen Patton NG3P ng3p@arrl.net 610-630-9862 Labels and mailing: KB3IV Submissions deadline: All copy must be in the hands of the Editor by the 20th of the previous month.		Directors: W3AOK (11) WA3KIO (11) N3XKE (11) KB2ERL (12) W3STW (12) WU3I (12) ND3B (A)	Contact Phil-Mont: P.O. Box 88 Abington, PA 19001 http://www.phil-mont.org Website: Eric N3QV & Andrew KC2PMW For club information: Contact any club officer, or the repeaters listed below. Address or club directory changes and articles for the membership e-mail list should be sent to: KB3IV
		Sunday Morning Net Schedules • 2 Meter/ 70cm Net..... at 0930L on W3QV repeater • 10-on-10 Net at 1000L 28.393 MHz USB (±QRM) • 75 meter Net at 1020L 3.993 MHz LSB • ARES at 2100L on the W3QV repeater	
Committees Archives: NG3P Audit: NS3K Blurb folding: KB3IV & N3GLU Directory: KB3IV	DX: N3MT Emerg.Coar: K3HWE Field Day: KE3QB Internet: N3QV & KC2PMW Membership: N3XKE	Net Control: KB3IV Publicity: W3RM Program: Club VP Public Service: KE3QB Refreshments: W3AOK Repeater: W3AOK	Scholarship: W3RM Skywarn: WX3PHI Sunshine: N3GLU VE Program: NS3K Welcome: N3UBY Youth: N3MT

All visitors are welcome!

The club meets at 7:30 PM on the *second* non-holiday Wednesday each month except July and August at **Roxborough Memorial Hospital**, 5800 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19128
Maps and directions are available at www.phil-mont.org.

License Examinations are held on the fourth **non-holiday Thursday** each month at **Community Ambulance Association, 1414 E. Butler Pike, Ambler PA 19002**
Registration begins at 7:00 P.M. Applicants should contact Jim McCloskey NS3K at 215-275-2979 or jmccloskey@msn.com for the latest information.

Club Stations W3QV/R: The Jim Spencer Memorial Repeater System
Ridge & Port Royal Avenues, Philadelphia, PA **Trustee: W3RM**
147.03 MHz + PL 91.5 Hz 444.80 MHz + PL 186.2 Hz
Reach us on EchoLink through W3QV-R
W3AA Trustee: WU3I
W3EM: Field Day/special event station Trustee: N3QV

The Officers

Pres: KB3IV Ed Masarsky 310 Saw Mill Ln. Horsham PA 19044 kb3iv@comcast.net
Vice Pres: N3QV Eric D. Marano, PO BOX 233, Skippack PA 19474 n3qv@arrl.net
Sec: KB3MIV Jen Miller 9427 Kirkwood Rd. 1st Fl. Phila 19114 jencaz@verizon.net
Treas: W3RM Richard A. Moll roger.mike@verizon.net
Asst. Treas: N3MT Michael P. Taraborrelli michaelmt_1999@yahoo.com

The Prez Sez ...

Hello Phil-Mont,

I am writing this a few days before Christmas and you will probably be receiving your Blurb before the New Year begins. Sharon and I send our best wishes to all for a Joyous Holiday Season, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Phil-Mont had a busy, interesting, happy and sad 2010. We started out the year with a very successful Auction Fest last January and moved to June with another fun filled Field Day. November was our traditional Old Timer's Night followed by elections in December. The other months saw meetings with interesting speakers and programs. The coming year we will strive to add programs and activities, which are new and fresh to our membership. What would you like to see or do? Give your input to our Club Officers. One idea submitted is to have some social events other than Club Meetings. This request will be addressed and implemented at our Board meeting. We really need to hear from you.

The past year saw too many members added to the list of Silent Keys. We will remember fondly:
 W3PWG Rolland (Rollie) Madara
 W3VVS Paul Bohlander
 WA3NSP William Mannino
 K3HIJ Joseph Elmaleh
 WE3D Joseph (Rick) Reichenbach
 K3SUE Susan Persing Not a PMRC member, but a good friend and benefactor to our Club and Amateur Radio.

The Board is working on improvements to our repeater system. Many of you have experienced the noise and static during times of high winds at the repeater site. We have effected a temporary fix by taking our main VHF antenna off line and switching to our dual band antenna used for UHF. Although this antenna is 20ft below the main antenna, coverage has not been diminished. UHF is now on a Discone antenna mounted on the roof of the repeater building. It still works, but not as well as before. We will keep the members informed as our project progresses.

I am encouraged by the increased participation in all our Club Nets. We have been getting many more check-ins on our HF nets. Hopefully, more members will fire up their old and new rigs and get back on the bands. I know some of you have problems deploying the proper antennas. Ask for help. If I can get on the air with my indoor antenna farm, so can you.

Lastly, many thanks to our intrepid crew of net control operators for their efforts throughout the year. You can be a member of the team, just contact me and I will put you in the rotation.

Happy and Healthy New Year

de Ed, KB3IV

NOTE: Please contact Ed, KB3IV, with any future directory changes or mailing issues.

Phil-Mont

Birthdays & Tidbytes

January Birthdays

03	Jonathan Verlin K3VU
04	Dorene Weiner (XYL WX3PHI)
15	Denise Burstein KB3ANO Karen Lenczynski (XYL KA3EIP)
22	Joseph Gormley-N3UGI
30	William Kane-N3OOL

Membership Stats

At press time PMRC had:

80 Full Paid Members

10 Family Members

4 Youth Members

1 Honorary Member

*This month's VE session is the 20th.**As always, many thanks to our VE team !****From the Secretary***

PMRC BoD Meeting was cancelled for the month of December.

PMRC General Meeting Minutes, December 8, 2010

Ed, KB3IV, called the elections meeting to order at 2000.

W3RM gave the Treasurer's report. W3RM reported there are three scholarships available for 2011. This is the most the club has offered in one year. This is the tenth year PMRC is offering scholarships. KB3IV informed everyone the website has been updated recently. Please check it out. Membership is up to date. There are no service events coming up. We are ½ way to field day. KB3IV asked to pass out the ballots. The members all voted. While NS3K counted the votes, W3AOK showed us his antenna shooter. NS3K informed us of the results. There are three directors elected: WU3I, W3STW, and KB2ERL, and one appointed: ND3B. Everyone was congratulated. NS3K spoke about and showed us the Uniden Home Patrol. W3RM showed us a video of NCDXF (Northern California DX Foundation). They are the largest club of DX operators and they are a large supporter

of big DXpeditions. W3RM also shared a video of one of his DXpeditions. KB3MIV reminded everyone that next month is the auction and if anyone needs sheets for their auction items it is on the website to download. NS3K informed us there is VE testing on December 16, 2010. The meeting adjourned at 2135.

*de Jen, KB3MIV****Radio Stores ... 'N' More***

by Bob Thomas, W3NE

JACK BINNS**Wireless Hero**

John Robinson Binns was born to his unwed mother in the Union Poorhouse, Lancashire, England, in 1884. He completed school at age 13 and went to work in a telegraph office of the Great Eastern Railway. Tragedy struck as he was taking a short cut to deliver a message by ducking under a stopped railway car. The train moved before he could escape and both legs were crushed. Doctors decided not to amputate because infection had developed and he was near death anyway. Instead, they put Jack in traction, a new treatment then, and he remained bedridden for an entire year! This boy might have been poor, but he was ambitious with a thirst for knowledge, so while he was recuperating he learned everything he could about electricity, wireless and emerging electronics. Jack returned to the railway as chief of a major telegraph office after

he healed, but he decided to leave for work with a more opportunities. He secured employment with the Marconi Company, and after three months training in the company school, he went to sea as wireless operator on German ships. Three years later the Reichstag required all wireless operators on their ships to be German nationals, so in January 1909, Jack Binns became the wireless operator on the White Star Line's palatial *RMS Republic*, sister ship of the *Titanic*, then under construction at Belfast.

Warm water from the Gulf of Mexico flows around Florida, then northward near the East Coast at nearly six miles per hour. Vapor from the warm turbulent Gulf Stream mixes with cold North Atlantic air off Nantucket Island to form a dense fog in cold weather, sometimes so thick that visibility beyond 10 feet is impossible. Those were the conditions at 4 AM on January 23, 1909 as the 450-passenger *Republic* was creeping its way from New York toward Liverpool. Nearby, another ship, the *SS Florida*, was headed toward New York with 841 Italian immigrants who had recently survived a devastating earth quake at Messina. The two vessels were dangerously close, each able to hear the other's fog horn, yet invisible to the other. The *Florida* had no wireless facilities so the two ships were communicating by siren signals when suddenly, and inexplicably, *Florida's* bow crashed directly into the port side of *Republic*. Casualties were light, however the *Republic's* boilers were disabled, causing loss of steam pressure, failure of electric power, and loss of rudder control. The *Republic* was adrift and taking on water in total darkness.



Jack Binns was off duty and asleep in his tiny room adjacent to the *Republic's* wireless room when the collision occurred. Both rooms were in a wood shack added as an afterthought outside on a deck when wireless was installed on the *Republic*. Jolted awake by the impact, Binns rushed into the wireless room to assess the condition of the apparatus and get it on the air. In those days the frequency of spark transmitters was determined mainly by the antenna's resonant frequency, not an independent tuned circuit. Jack had no way of knowing in total darkness if his aerial was up and intact, or if it had been damaged by the impact. The only way to find out would be to fire-up the transmitter and see how it loaded. He changed over from now-dead ship's power to storage batteries, known in that era as "accumulators," which were always kept fully charged in case of emergency. He pressed the key tentatively and the loud raucous sound of the 1.5 kW spark indicated the set was operating properly. Whew! Lower voltage from use of battery power caused the spark's note to be lower in pitch than normal, which would make reception difficult. Even worse, transmitter power output on batteries was much lower than normal so its range would be sixty miles at most, just about the distance from the foundering ship to the nearest Marconi land station at Siasconsett on Nantucket Island, Massachusetts.

Binns negotiated an arduous route through wreckage in black of night to the bridge where he reported readiness of his wireless gear to Captain Sealby. Sealby gave his best estimate of the ship's position to Jack, who returned to the shack and immediately began sending, "CQD" (the distress signal of the time) followed by the *Republic's* call letters, "MKC." His signals were barely readable by Siasconsett operator Jack Irwin, requiring Binns to send slowly, but Irwin replied that he had copied Binns and was relaying his position to other ships. The *RMS Baltic* and other nearby ships changed course and began steaming toward the stricken *Republic* as fast as visibility would permit.

Conditions in the radio shack through all this turmoil were inhospitable, to say the least. First, an entire wall on one side had been demolished in the collision, allowing raw, frigid sea air to blow in constantly. The transmit/receive switch had broken,

requiring Jack to hold it closed with one hand the whole time he was sending with the other. Accumulators do not provide full current instantaneously like a modern storage battery, so he had to send slowly enough for transmitter supply voltage to build up. And finally, crowds of passengers attracted by the flashing arc pushed their way into the wireless shack, making it almost impossible for Jack to do his job until he chased them all out. The latter problem was completely resolved at 10 AM the next morning when the *Florida*, which had rammed the *Republic* but was not fatally damaged itself, returned and lay nearby while crews of both ships worked relentlessly to ferry passengers in lifeboats from the slowly sinking *Republic* to the Italian ship.

Captain Sealby gave periodic updates on the position of his drifting ship to Jack for transmission to the *Baltic* when it became near enough for direct wireless contact. Sealby obtained the coordinates from bearings on a Submarine Bell at Nantucket. It was one of several submerged bells deployed at lightships and various coastal stations made to ring in a unique sequence that identified each bell and its location. Sound waves propagated underwater from the bell were picked up as a navigation aid from as far away as 30 miles by appropriately equipped ships. Those ships had a water-filled chamber on each side of the bow. A microphone in each chamber detected the bell's sound waves and fed separate receivers on the ship's bridge. By comparing relative audio levels from each mike, the navigator was able to determine the ship's position relative to the Submarine Bell.

Darkness fell and heavy fog closed in as the *Baltic* slowly approached the *Republic*. Binns reported to Captain Sealby that *Baltic's* signal strength had become abnormally high, indicating they were very close indeed. Both ships then began using conventional marine "bombs," rockets and fog horns to facilitate the final approach, which concluded when the *Baltic* arrived alongside at 7 PM. The next morning, Jack and a few crew remained onboard the *Republic* as it was towed toward New York by a U.S. Revenue Cutter, but by nightfall it was listing so badly all hands were ordered to abandon ship. Captain Sealby and the

First Mate remained onboard while Jack and the remaining crew were ferried to an escort ship. Not long afterward, the majestic *Republic* slipped to its watery grave. The Captain and Mate abandoned at the last second and were rescued.

Binns received the adulation that only Manhattan can bestow on a hero and he wrote a series of articles describing his adventure for *The New York Times*. The required legal inquiry into the accident was never held; Britain and the United States held cursory reviews but their outcomes were inconsequential, neither assigning responsibility for the collision nor issuing recommendations for improved safety at sea. The U.S. Senate held substantive hearings during which Jack Binns testified that all ships at sea should have two wireless operators to ensure 24-hour monitoring for possible disasters. Although he was complimented for his testimony, his suggestion was ignored. Two years later the *Californian* was only fourteen miles from the sinking *Titanic*, and could have saved 1400 lives had its sole wireless operator not closed down the ship's wireless station after completing his scheduled day watch.

In 1911 Binns was scheduled to join another Marconi operator to man the wireless station of the *Titanic* on its inaugural voyage the following year. However, the head of the White Star line was concerned that Binns would bring bad luck and unfavorable publicity to the new vessel, so Jack was assigned to other ships instead. He was later made Traveling Inspector in a position created especially for him. His interest and talent in writing, coupled with the desire of his new wife that he leave the sea, resulted in Jack's departure from Marconi for a job with a newspaper. Jack joined the Flying Corps of Canada during the First World War, learned to fly, and became an instructor for the Corps and later for the RAF. He returned to civilian life as Editor of Aviation and Radio for the New York Tribune. In 1924 Binns became Assistant Treasurer for the prestigious Hazeltine electronics development company where he rose to President from 1942 to 1955 when Hazeltine was at the forefront of developments in military electronics and color television. Jack Binns passed away in 1959.

For Sale

Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club has radio equipment donated to the Scholarship Fund for sale. Please review the list below and contact Steve, WU3I, if you have any interest or questions. Contact him at wu3i@arrl.net

Drake L4B HF Amplifier \$700.00
Rohn 25G tower sections
9 ten foot sections \$50.00 EACH
2 taper top sections with rotor shelf \$50.00 EACH
3 foldover baseplates \$100.00 EACH

And ...

6 foot telephone relay rack on castors,
Optoelectronics FC-50 frequency counter,
ARRL handbooks 1933 - onward
Kreco 10 meter coaxial vertical antenna,
Antique headphones,
Multimeters, old technical books and parts.

Contact Tom Bohlander WA3KLR, 215-536-1331

And ...

Kenwood TR-7950 2 meter mobile 45 watts
noise canceling microphone
w/ PL encoder - 3 diode selectable PL's
Operators manual
This is a great radio for APRS
Asking \$45.00

Kenwood TH-215 2 meter 5 watt HT
PL decoder installed (this was option when new)
Speaker Microphone
Cigarette lighter DC power cord
Drop in quick charger
Asking \$75.00

Hustler 2 meter gain antenna G7-144
OAL 192 inches
with documentation
Asking \$ 10.00

Contact Rick Spencer N3FD

Phone number available in Blurb directory

Please feel free to forward to other clubs of which you are a member

So we got our first snow fall of the season... anyone else ready for Spring??



January at PMRC ...*1ST Sat – New Year's Day**2nd Sun – W3STW - NCS**5th Wed – Board of Directors Meeting**9th Sun – N3OWM – NCS**12th Wed – General Meeting & Auction Fest!**16th Sun – KB3IV – NCS**17th Mon – Martin Luther King Day**20th Thurs – VE Test Session**23rd Sun – KB3SJV - NCS**30th Sun - N3QV - NCS*

And don't forget the **ARES** net every
 Sunday night at 2100L and the new **Digital**
Net Tuesdays at 1900L, both on W3QV/R

*Check out this rope for your antenna
 project –*

*3/32" Braided Olive Drab - Dacron / Polyester
 cord*

*This is a high quality braided polyester cord with a
 breaking strength of 210 pounds. Proudly Made in
 the U.S.A.!*

*This is a gorgeous solid braid perfect for dipole
 antennas. Very low stretch and strong. Will
 withstand the weather & sun for 7 to 10 years.*

*PRICE \$10.00 PER 100 FEET
 SOLD IN 100 FOOT LOTS
 CONTACT STEVE WU3I AT
 WU3I@ARRL.NET*

--... ..-- --... ..-- --... ..-- --... ..--

First Class Mail

The Phil-Mont Mobile Radio Club, Inc
 310 Saw Mill Lane, Apt 6D, Horsham PA 19044

The Blurb